

PETUNIA PLANT NAMED 'SUNBEL-LABU'

Botanical/commercial classification:

*Petunia hybrida*/Petunia Plant

5 Varietal denomination: cv. 'Sunbel-labu'

BACKGROUND OF THE VARIETY

10 The present invention relates to a new variety of  
Petunia plant originated from crossing of a Petunia  
hybrid variety called '9LB6' as the female parent and  
'9LB1' as the male parent.

15 The Petunia is a very popular plant that is used for  
flower bedding and potting in the summer season. There  
are only a few Petunia developed series of small flower  
petunias, such as, 'SUNTORY SP-R' (U.S. Plant Pat. No.  
9557), 'Sunberubu' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9754),  
'Sunbelchipi' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 10,355) and 'Sunbelki'  
20 (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 11,558). These are of the spreading  
type, a medium plant height, abundant branching, and a  
high resistance to heat and rain and disease. However  
there are only a few varieties having a great profusion  
of flowers, light purple flower color, a very small  
25 flower size and a high resistance to rain, heat, and  
disease. Accordingly, this invention was aimed at  
obtaining a new Petunia variety having light purple  
colored petals, and very small flowers combined with the  
above features.

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Progress

35 The female parent '9LB6' (unpatented) used in the  
crossing of 'Sunbel-labu' is a strain of our breeding  
lines, having an outwardly spreading growth habit with  
abundant branching. It has small single flowers, the  
petals having light purple color.

The male parent '9LB1' (unpatented) used in the crossing of 'Sunbel-labu' is a strain of our breeding lines, having a spreading growth habit with many  
5 branches. It has small single flowers, the petals having a light purple color.

In April 2000, crossing of '9LB6' as the female parent and '9LB1' as the male parent was conducted at  
10 Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan. In September 2000, 50 seedlings were obtained from that crossing. These seedlings were grown in pots in glasshouses and were evaluated. One seedling was selected in view of its growth habit, flower size and color in September 2001.  
15 That seedling was propagated by cutting and a trial was carried out by flower potting and bedding from April to October 2002. The botanical characteristics of that plant were then examined, using similar varieties 'Sunbelchipi' and 'Sunbelkubu' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 10,279) for  
20 comparison. As a result, it was concluded that this Petunia plant is distinguishable from any other variety, whose existence is known to us, and is uniform and stable in its characteristics. Then the new variety of Petunia plant was named 'Sunbel-labu'.  
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In the following description, the color-cording is in accordance with the Horticultural Colour Chart of The  
30 Royal Horticultural Society, London, England (R.H.S. Colour Chart).

#### SUMMARY OF THE VARIETY

This new variety is unlike any Petunia commercially available as evidenced by the following unique  
35 combinations of characteristics.

1. Spreading growth habit with abundant branching.
2. Having a great profusion of blooms with the

entire plant remaining in bloom for a considerable period of time.

3. The flowers are single and very small. The petal color is light purple (R.H.S.76A) with deep reddish purple (R.H.S.77A) midvein.

4. The plant has a high resistance to rain, cold, heat and diseases.

The new variety 'Sunbel-labu' differs from the similar variety 'Sunbelchipi' in the following points.

1. The leaf of 'Sunbel-labu' is smaller than that of 'Sunbelchipi'.

2. The petal color of 'Sunbel-labu' is light purple (R.H.S.76A) with deep reddish purple (R.H.S.77A) midvein. That of 'Sunbelchipi' is vivid purplish red (R.H.S.N57A).

3. The bottom color of the corolla throat of 'Sunbel-labu' is vivid yellow (R.H.S. 14B). That of 'Sunbelchipi' is strong yellow (R.H.S.9A).

4. The outside color of the corolla tube of 'Sunbel-labu' is dark yellowish pink (R.H.S. 182C). That of 'Sunbelchipi' is brilliant greenish yellow (R.H.S. 5C).

5. The apex shape of petal of 'Sunbel-labu' is rounded. That of 'Sunbelchipi' is obtuse.

The new variety 'Sunbel-labu' differs from the similar variety 'Sunbelkubu' in the following points.

1. The growth habit of 'Sunbel-labu' is Spreading. That of 'Sunbelkubu' is decumbent.

2. The leaf length of 'Sunbel-labu' is shorter than that of 'Sunbelkubu'.

3. The petal color of 'Sunbel-labu' is light purple (R.H.S.76A) with deep reddish purple (R.H.S.77A) midvein. That of 'Sunbelkubu' is vivid purple (R.H.S.N81A).

4. The bottom color of the corolla throat of

'Sunbel-labu' is vivid yellow (R.H.S.14B). That of 'Sunbelkubu' is brilliant greenish yellow (R.H.S.5C).

5        5.    The outside color of the corolla tube 'Sunbel-labu' is dark yellowish pink (R.H.S.182C). That of 'Sunbelkubu' is pale yellow green (R.H.S.1D).

6.    The apex shape of petal of 'Sunbel-labu' is rounded. That of 'Sunbelkubu' is obtuse.

10        This new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunbel-labu' was asexually reproduced by the use of cuttings at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan, and homogeneity and stability were confirmed. The instant plant retains its distinctive characteristics and reproduces true to type in successive generations.

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#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

20        The depicted plants had been reproduced by the use of cuttings and were photographed during September 2002 while growing outdoors in 24 cm pots at an age of approximately 8 months at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan.

25        FIG. 1 is a photograph of a typical plant of the new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunbel-labu' while growing in a pot.

FIG. 2 is a photograph of a close view of flowers and leaves of the new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunbel-labu'.

#### 30        DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIETY

35        The botanical characteristics of the new and distinct variety of Petunia plant named 'Sunbel-labu' while growing outdoors in 24 cm pots at an age of approximately 9 months at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan, are as follows:

Plant:

Growth habit. - Spreading.

Plant height. - Approximately 45.0 cm.

Spreading area of plant. - Approximately 14.3 cm.

5 Blooming period. - April to late October in the southern Kanto area, Japan. The plant shape does not change throughout this period.

Stem:

Thickness. - Approximately 1.4 mm.

Pubescence. - Sparse.

10 Branching. - Abundant branching, especially secondary branches are.

Internode length. - Approximately 0.7 cm.

Color. - R.H.S. 144B, 200C (strong yellow green, grayish brown).

15 Leaf:

Whole shape. - Lanceolate. The apex shape is acute, and the base shape is attenuate.

Length. - Approximately 1.8 cm.

Width. - Approximately 0.8 cm.

20 Color. - Upper side color is R.H.S. 146A (moderate olive green). Bottom side color is R.H.S. 146B (moderate yellow green).

Thickness. - Approximately 0.4 mm.

Pubescence. - Sparse.

25 Flower:

Facing direction. - Slanted upward.

Type. - Single.

Shape. - Funnel-shape, with five-fissured limb.

Shape of petal chip. - Rounded.

30 Lobation. - Shallow

Waving of petal. - Weak.

Diameter. - Approximately 2.5 cm.

35 Color. - Petal; R.H.S. 76A (light purple) with R.H.S. 77A (deep reddish purple) midvein. Bottom color of the corolla throat; R.H.S. 14B (vivid yellow). Outside color of the corolla tube; R.H.S. 182C (dark yellowish pink).

Reproductive organs. - 1 normal pistil and 5 normal

stamens. The stigma is club-shaped and R.H.S.N144D (light yellow green) in coloration. The style is approximately 6 mm in length and R.H.S. 145B (brilliant yellow green) in coloration. The ovary is R.H.S. N144D (light yellow green) in coloration. The stamens commonly are of variable length from approximately 4.6 to 6.6 mm. Pollen is formed in a quantity that is typical of *Petunia hybrida* and is near R.H.S.15D (light yellow) in coloration.

10 Fertility. - Fertile, but self-incompatible.

Peduncle. - Approximately 0.6 mm in diameter and approximately 0.7 cm in length. The texture is smooth.

Calyx. - Narrow. 5 sepals in fused at the base.

15 Seeds. - R.H.S.N186A (strong red) in coloration, approximately 0.6 mm in diameter, and generally round. The quantity is typical of *Petunia hybrida*.

Physiological and ecological characteristics:

20 High resistance to cold, heat, rain and disease, such as Powdery mildew. The resistance to heat and rain is very strong.

Blooming:

25 This new variety of *Petunia* plant is most suitable for flower bedding and potting, particularly in hanging pots or planters. Pinching of old blossoms will enhance the formation of new blossoms.